



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HUSBAND AND WIFE SENTENCED TO PRISON  
FOR FEDERAL PROGRAM FRAUD UNDER THE BLACK LUNG ACT**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that in Austin, James and Susan Hisle of Jarrell, Texas, were sentenced this morning to 16 months and six months in federal prison, respectively, for defrauding the federal government of over \$30,000.

In addition, U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks ordered that the defendants pay \$27,864.17 restitution and be placed under supervised release for a period of three years after completing their prison term.

According to court documents, Susan Hisle's great uncle, Alton B. Clear, was a coal miner who suffered serious health problems as a result of his occupation. In 1970, Clear began receiving Black Lung Miners Benefit checks from the United States Treasury. After Clear's death in September 1997 and continuing to April 2, 2004, the Hisles received, forged and cashed approximately 60 of his beneficiary checks. On August 11, 2005, the defendants pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Ashley Chapman prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government.

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